



The Maryland State Medical Society

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November 17, 1999

Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

To Whom It Concern:

The Environmental and Occupational Health Committee of MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, would like to inform the Federal and Drug Administration of MedChi's Resolution 7-99, Latex Allergies, (see enclosure) in the hopes that our resolution will be taken into account as the FDA considers new guidelines for Surgeon's and Patient Examination Gloves.

If you have any questions, you are welcome to contact Maureen Sullivan, 410-539-0872, extension 306, MedChi's staff person for the Environmental and Occupational Health Committee.

Sincerely,

Katherine P. Farrell, M.D., M.P.H.

Enclosure.

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HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution 7-99

INTRODUCED BY: Public Health Council
Environmental and Occupational Health Committee

SUBJECT: Latex Allergies

REFERRED TO: Reference Committee B

Whereas, Allergic responses to latex are a significant emerging public health problem whose magnitude has increased significantly over the past decade, in large part due to the extensive use of latex gloves; and

Whereas, OSHA's Standard on Blood Borne Pathogens and Universal Precautions has been incorrectly interpreted to mandate that gloves be made of latex in order to meet the standard; and

Whereas, Once an individual becomes sensitized to latex proteins, he/she may unavoidably face a chronic and progressive physical deterioration with repeated exposure and can potentially become a victim of an unpredictable life threatening vulnerability in an environment loaded with latex; and

Whereas, Adequate alternatives to latex gloves and other latex-containing products exist that are highly cost-effective; and

Whereas, The "Occupational and Safety" section of the "Healthy People 2010 Objectives for Public Comment", identifies a need within health care facilities for policies that include current CDC recommendations to prevent latex allergy in the workplace; and

Whereas, One of the greatest barriers to change lies on the lack of an understanding of the nature of this problem and the solutions that are currently available, therefore be it

Resolved, That MedChi support dissemination of current information to raise physician awareness of latex allergy prevention in order to foster the development and implementation of policies that address key intervention strategies. These include understanding the indications for latex gloves in order to minimize their use, using only medical grade vinyl and powder free latex gloves that meet FDA standards, reducing the latex burden in health care environments, and preventing the progression of response in those already sensitized.

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES ON APRIL 25, 1999.

MedChi

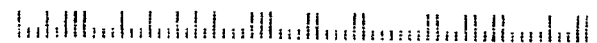
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